

OPPOSED CO-OPERATION.

An Address to the State Farmers' Alliance By a Committee of the State Assembly of the Knights of Labor.

TO THE KANSAS STATE FARMERS' ALLIANCE:—We address you as friends and coworkers in the cause of Common Justice and Industrial Progress.

Appreciating and heartily reciprocating the kindly and fraternal feeling manifested by you in sending a representative of your body, Mr. A. E. Dickenson, to Leavenworth, on August 5th, to join us in an informal meeting and consultation, the Kansas State Assembly of the Knights of Labor have appointed the subscribers hereof a committee to draft an address to you, discussing the subjects which are mutually interesting and important to us.

This is done in the hope that it may tend to increase a fraternal feeling among the kindred organizations of labor which are menaced by the same dangers, and, which must be saved by the same agencies and remedies.

That Committee now addressing you, desires to express an earnest belief that the members of the various labor organizations, in the shops, on the farms, in the mines and factories, and in every useful avocation of industry, have a unity of interests, as opposed to the monopolies, trusts and combines, now organized and solidifying for the purpose of cheating and robbing the creators of wealth.

We recognize that there has existed and still exists a feeling among laboring men and farmers that their interests are not identical. The laboring men have assumed, from superficial observation, that when farmers get good prices for crops, laboring men must, therefore, pay more for family supplies. And, the farmers have assumed, from the same superficial observation, that higher prices for labor must necessarily mean higher prices for the products of the shops and factories; and, hence, greater cost and expenses on the farms.

We beg to explain, that, in our opinion, under present circumstances controlled by combines, trusts and transportation companies, the prices of products in the hands of producers bear very little relation to the prices of the same products when they reach the consumers. Beef worth two to three cents on foot is worth ten to fifteen cents when sold by the butcher. Speculators get the difference.

Now in order to arrive at the truth of this matter we should go to the bottom of it. The prices of land and labor and the products of land and labor, comprehending all of the commodities of commerce, are controlled by the relative amounts of money to be used, as commodities to be handled with the money. The subject may be illustrated by the statement of a sum in long division;

Divisor	Dividend	Quotient.
Commodities	money	Prices.

For more than twenty years, while the commodities of the country have been constantly increasing, the volume of money has not so increased; but, in the aggregate, has decreased during that time. Hence during that entire time, the sea level of prices has been constantly falling lower and lower.

Senator Plumb of this state, in his place in the U. S. Senate, March 27, 1888, said, that during the last three years preceeding that date, the volume of the money of the country has been contracted five per cent of its volume, which contraction, he stated, had reduced the cash value of property in this country three billions of dollars (\$3,000,000,000). That tremendous sum is greater than the entire national debt at the close of the war. Is it not astounding that the mere change of the relative volumes of money and commodities should cost the country in three years as much actual cash value as the war of the rebellion cost in four years. And, yet, no fact is better established by the united testimony of all the best writers of Europe and America, than, that with a decreasing volume of money and increasing commodities, there is no bottom to prices except a receding one. They agree that such fact is self evident. When money is increasing as compared with commodities, prices are rising and times are good; work is plentiful for all able and willing hands, and there are no idle men nor starving people, except among the vicious and irretrievably indolent. It is a matter of common observation, also, that in prosperous times the vicious classes grow smaller, and, in hard times they grow larger and more dangerous, as enforced idleness increases. These facts being well established by the united testimony of all the best writers on the subject, and as a matter of intelligent observation, it is plain that the subject of the finances is one of the greatest importance. Senator Plumb very truthfully pronounces it the most important subject now before the people. This subject is now under the decision of the U. S. Supreme Court, practically in the hands of the people, through their representatives in Congress. It is in the power of Congress to supply the people with a legal tender money at an equable rate per capita, as the people and their commodities shall increase. Under such policy there would still be the rise and fall of the prices of individual products, in obedience to the laws of supply and demand like the rise and fall of the billows of the ocean; but the sea level of prices would remain the same. The rise of one commodity would balance the fall of another, and most of the risks of industrial enterprises would be abolished; debts could be paid by the sale of labor and its products, borrowing of money would decrease and bankruptcies would be less frequent.

With rising prices for the products of labor for a time, to balance the forced decline of the last four or five years, and level prices forever after that, all industries would be placed on a healthy basis, all willing hands would be profitably employed, one million (1,000,000) idle and starving men and their families would become profitable customers for the products of the farms and the factories. With five millions of hungry mouths and naked bodies added to our cash paying customers, markets for farm and factory products would be materially improved.

Then add another ten millions of people who are now only half employ-

ed, half fed and half clothed, and another important and steady addition will be made to the paying consumers of farm and factory products.

We are willing to admit, that, under the improved and prosperous state of things here contemplated, farmers would pay higher wages for farm hands, but there would be better prices and larger demands for farm products. And, it may be set down as a general rule, that, the more men and women there are employed in the factories, shops and mines, and the higher wages they receive, the greater will be the demand for farm products, and the higher will be the prices. In this, certainly, the farmers and other laboring people have an identity of interests.

As combines and trusts have come into existence through unhealthy commercial conditions we believe that healthy conditions would tend to abolish them; hence, while the producer of commodities would realize better prices, consumers would scarcely pay so high as now. Take, again, the case of beef; the producers and consumers are not prosperous, while the combines that control prices at both ends of the market become millionaires. With rising prices farmers could afford to hold products in spite of combines and trusts. With falling prices they cannot.

On the subject of land monopoly the Knights of Labor and the Farmers' Alliance do not disagree. Both are opposed to speculative investments to the detriment of actual settlers. The two organizations, also, agree that rail roads should be controlled in the interests of the people, and not for the creation of millionaires, who consider themselves entirely above all responsibility to the people.

Of course there are other general or national subjects which are worthy of our most serious and earnest consideration but they are mostly subjects on which men agree or disagree as individuals, and not on the lines of Industrial Organization.

On one main point and in our opinion, the most important of all, we are substantially a unit now in all patriotic industrial organizations. We refer to the subject of popular education on economic subjects; and that an educated people and an enlightened ballot are our best and only remedy for the evils we complain of.

Co-operation is a subject on which the Knights of Labor and the Farmers' Alliance are becoming agreed when they mutually understand each other. Each should organize for themselves, both production and consumption. Each side should become as far as possible, co-operative buyers of each others products. An organized market is just as essential to every class of producers as organized production. The farmers should organize to furnish supplies for the usage of laborers, and the laboring men should organize a demand; and vice versa. Then let the agents of the two sides, in cases where it is practicable, meet for exchange. In this way we may approximate that desirable state of things when the great speculative cormorant class of middle men will be abolished.

This subject of co-operation is a favorite theme with all industrial

organizations. It should be thoroughly studied in all its details. In our opinion a good way to solve it, in practice, is for the producers and consumers of the commodities of commerce to meet together, to talk together and trade together, and, as far and as fast as practicable, to begin at once to dispense with the great speculative class of middle men.

With this hasty statement and fraternal greeting, we beg to express the earnest hope that all men of honest labor, on the farms and in the shops, mines and factories; and all engaged in legitimate business pursuits, will join their hearts, heads, hands and votes in the patriotic work of saving the country from the burdens that are sinking all the industrial classes into the same abyss of ruin; and, from the dangers that threaten the overthrow of the liberties of the country.

Leavenworth Kans.,

August 6, 1889.

JOHN DAVIS	Committee
H. H. HUTCHISON	K. OF L.
W. E. HENDERSON	K. OF L.
R. J. ST. CLAIR, K. S. M. W. K. OF L.	
(SEAL)	W. T. ANDERSON,
	Sec'y.

A member of the Jefferson county Central Committee was recently summoned to appear before that august body to answer the grave charge of having supported a candidate for office at the last election whose name was not on the Republican ticket. The gentleman did not respond in person but sent a letter to the Committee in which he acknowledged the truth of the charge as to one candidate. We understand that he was severely scored by some members of the committee for this unpardonable offence, but for prudential reasons they decided to take no action upon the matter at the present time. We have very little to say upon this subject just at the present time; but we would advise our Central Committee to go a little slow in relation to such matters just now. They are liable to hear something drop before the next election.

We publish in another column of the present issue the address of the Kansas State Assembly of the Knights of Labor to the Kansas State Alliance assembled at Newton on the 14th inst. We regard this as an important document, indicating as it does a desire for co-operation between these two great and powerful organizations for advancement of common interests. The tendency of the times is to general consolidation and co-operation of all kindred associations of men, preparatory to one of the greatest civil revolutions of modern times. The people are becoming aroused by the continued aggressions of consolidated capital, as they have never been aroused before. History furnishes no parallel to the growth of the farmers' and laborers movement of the present time, and the influence of these co-operative organizations is sure to be felt in the near future.

Special Notice.

Space is freely offered in the Advocate for correspondents who desire to discuss any of the issues of the Alliance or matter of interest to general readers.